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ABSTRACT

This description of the policy framework for Oregon's distance education program gives an overview of the progress to date, outlines five areas in which policy must be developed, and identifies a number of priorities among those areas. Progress is reported in the following areas: several initiatives that incorporate new telecommunications and computing technologies into teaching and learning off-campus; development of 237 distance courses for 1995-96; and, in the Portland area, direct broadcasting of courses into high-technology businesses. Extra attention is recommended for the following five major areas: (1) planning, quality, and program/courses (statewide inter-sector plan for distance education, local and regional needs assessments, resource sharing, quality assurance, articulation); (2) student services (access to and efficiency of services provided off campus); (3) faculty issues (incentives and rewards for participation, training opportunities, intellectual property considerations, copyrights); (4) tuition/fees and student enrollments (comparable fees for distance and traditional-delivery education, extra funding to support off-campus delivery, funding establishment of distance education infrastructure, registration); and (5) technical standards (consistent and compatible technologies, services, and procedures across the state). Priorities are identified from among these task areas. A list of contributors is appended. (MSE)

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ED 399 826

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

Prepared for the
Oregon State Board of Higher Education

Oregon State System of Higher Education
Office of Academic Affairs
P.O. Box 3175
Eugene, OR 97403-0175

September 15, 1995

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DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

Executive Summary

Introduction

Distance Education extends the process of teaching and learning from the campus to one or more locations including classrooms on other campuses, worksites, community centers and homes. For example, an instructor may teach a class in a room with "live" students, while simultaneously broadcasting the class session to students in another city or town. Typically, these "remote" students have access to the originating site via a two-way audio/video link and a computer conferencing channel, and are able to interact with the instructor and other class participants. A key strategy in OSSHE's vision of a restructured higher education system is to expand the System's learning opportunities on- and off-campus using multiple technologies. This Executive Summary provides a brief synopsis of a proposed policy framework to enact our distance education strategy.

The Process and Progress to Date

In *Education Unbounded: A Vision of Public Higher Education Serving Oregon in the Year 2010*, OSSHE committed to "develop new educational strategies and capacities ... to serve students who are not campus oriented in the traditional sense ..." and promised that the State System would "provide the social, interpersonal, and developmental learning experiences appropriate to their needs and situations." During recent years, critical issues and opportunities in distance learning have been identified, statewide planning in distance education regarding the uses of technology has occurred, and a variety of councils and committees have considered systemwide and institutional-level changes. The purpose of comprehensive planning for distance education is to increase access to higher education throughout the state, effectively utilize technologies to enhance both faculty and student productivity, and better integrate distance learning programs into the mainstream of OSSHE instructional programs. The "Distance Education Policy Framework" is a report in progress that focuses on work to be done.

At several recent meetings (e.g., January 20, 1995, September 23, 1994) Board members have received reports of campus and Chancellor's Office initiatives that incorporate new technologies in telecommunications and computing into teaching and learning. For example, OSSHE was a key partner in developing Oregon ED-NET and continues to be its major user. In just four years, OSSHE programming to off-campus sites has increased exponentially. For 1995-96, 237 courses are already scheduled for delivery using this mode of transmission alone, and we anticipate that about 250 courses will have been offered by the end of the academic year. In addition, OSSHE campuses use in-person modes of distance education delivery and, in the Portland area, Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) systems to broadcast courses directly into high technology

businesses. Using these and other mediums, the virtual public university is rapidly taking shape. However, coherent planning and policy development to enable us to meet emerging needs most effectively and efficiently has lagged.

The Policy Framework

Five major categories reflect clusters of tasks that need to be addressed: Planning, Quality and Program/Courses; Student Services; Faculty Issues; Tuition/Fees and Student Enrollments; and Technical Standards.

1. Planning, Quality and Program/Courses

   This area addresses issues of the division of labor with other sectors, program development, and maintenance of appropriate standards. It includes: the development of a statewide intersector plan for distance education; conducting local and regional needs assessments; providing for OSSHE campuses to assume lead-institution responsibilities to build from our strengths; the development of shared university centers with other providers for the delivery of programs and courses; meeting assurances of program quality and establishing the evaluation processes that undergird standards; and addressing issues of institutional cooperation and articulation to reduce fragmentation from the student's perspective.

2. Student Services

   Planning principles in this category have been developed to assure that part-time distance education students have access to services comparable to residential and commuter students. Issues of marketing and admissions, financial aid for part-time students, advising, library resources, and computer literacy (so that students can use the technologies) are addressed. Further, maximum efficiency and convenience in serving students is sought by proposing the development of shared services at central sites.

3. Faculty Issues

   Recommendations to encourage greater involvement of faculty in distance education programs include areas of incentives and rewards for the additional effort often required to participate effectively in distance learning activities; training opportunities to ensure command of the new technologies; the fair determination of intellectual property rights (the "who owns what" of technology products) of both faculty and institutions; and consideration of a copyrighted materials clearinghouse function at a central level.

4. Tuition/Fees and Student Enrollments

Recommendations in this area are intended to bring distance education programs and courses into the mainstream of campus business. They include: assessing fees for distance education courses that are comparable to traditional means of delivery; when justified, permitting general fund monies to support delivery of instruction by technology versus "self-support" funding; assisting campuses in building distance education infrastructure; recording student enrollments systematically regardless of location, time or sponsoring department for purposes of planning and evaluating programs.

5. Technical Standards

This area is concerned with establishing and maintaining consistent high quality standards for distance education throughout the State System. Needs include: the development of compatible technologies (e.g., systems, hardware), services and procedures across both send and receive sites; and the establishment of quality guidelines for the production and delivery of courses and programs that are the best that they can be within the resources available.

The Priorities

The policy framework presents an ambitious agenda for implementation. Some principles and policies are already in practice or are readily implementable, and others are high-priority action items needing to be addressed in the very near future. Among the latter are: needs assessments to determine where to direct new initiatives, establishment of guidelines that permit sharing of courses and programs among institutions, establishing systemwide plans for infrastructure development regarding technology use, focusing attention on issues of faculty concern such as intellectual property rights and copyrights, further planning of student academic services such as advising and library resources, and developing technical standards for consistently high quality service delivery.

Feedback is sought from Board members regarding proposed planning directions and the priority that should be given to some planning issues over others. How "blended" should on-campus teaching/learning be with off-campus? Is the "divide and coordinate responsibility" strategy OSSHE has thus far pursued preferable to considering a separate virtual university (e.g., The Educational Network of Maine)? Shall we actively plan other centers (e.g., Central Oregon University Center) in partnership with entities such as community colleges and seek resources to support these new models?

DRAFT – 4/20/95

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK:
RATIONALE/BACKGROUND AND IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

There will be a new population of students who are not campus oriented in the traditional sense. These students will study primarily at their own pace and for the most part, through interactive telecommunications and computers at a wide variety of sites – their workplace, home, community college, or other facility in their vicinity. New educational strategies and capacities will need to be developed to serve these students and to provide the social, interpersonal, and developmental learning experiences appropriate to their needs and situations.

Education Unbounded: A Vision of Public Higher Education Serving Oregon in the Year 2010

Oregon State System of Higher Education
Office of Academic Affairs
P.O. Box 3175
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DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK: RATIONALE/BACKGROUND AND IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

Expanding distance learning opportunities is a key strategy to OSSHE's realization of a vision of a restructured higher education system. This vision increases access to students throughout the state and uses technology to enhance both faculty and student productivity. During the past two years, critical issues and policies in distance learning both in Oregon and other states have been identified, statewide planning in distance education regarding the uses of technology in instruction has occurred, and a variety of OSSHE councils and committees have considered policy changes, at both the system and institution level, that will be needed to move distance learning programs into the mainstream of OSSHE instructional programs. This document provides policy recommendations, rationale/background, and implementation notes for campus and system level consideration within the Oregon State System of Higher Education. Policies have been organized into five major categories: Planning, Quality, and Programs/Courses; Student Services; Faculty Issues; Tuition/Fees and Student Enrollments; and Technical Standards.

A. PLANNING, QUALITY, AND PROGRAMS/COURSES

1. Statewide Plan

OSSHE in concert with other partners should develop a statewide plan for the delivery of needed college-level distance learning programs and services.

Rationale/Background: There is growing interest in development of a statewide plan for programs and services using a variety of instructional technologies. The Joint Boards of Education has called for increased sharing of educational resources, between community colleges and OSSHE campuses, to increase access to Oregonians. There is also interest in making college-level courses available to college-ready high school students as the educational sectors work toward a more "seamless" educational system. Through the Joint Articulation Commission, the 1978 agreement between the community colleges and OSSHE institutions was updated in 1994 to clarify the missions of public postsecondary institutions. Further work will be needed in developing a statewide plan for delivering postsecondary programs using the new technologies.

Implementation Notes:

1.1 The Joint Boards of Education should develop a policy to guide statewide intersector planning for distance education programming.

1.2 The OSSHE Academic Council should meet with the Community College Instructional Council of Deans to develop a process for development of a statewide plan.

1.3

2. **Needs Assessment**

Working with the campuses, OSSHE should collect local and regional needs assessments from multiple sources in order to coordinate statewide needs assessments to be used in planning for distance learning programs and services.

Rationale/Background: Local and regional needs assessment should be conducted by OSSHE campuses in order to identify college-level educational resources that are most needed throughout the state. Needs assessments should be used to develop a statewide plan in order to avoid duplication of efforts and take advantage of the successful groundwork completed by regional councils and economic development groups. OSSHE should play a central role in coordinating statewide needs assessments. As the central coordinator, OSSHE should disseminate the findings of regional assessments and undertake the study of needs not addressed by regional or local efforts. Such needs assessments should cover curricular needs (degrees, courses/content areas) as well as preferred forms and delivery of programs (interactive television, short courses, learning centers, computer-mediated instructions, etc.). Assessment efforts should balance promoting existing programs, assessing the need for new programs, and evaluating attitudes toward delivery mechanisms. To remain innovative and responsive to changing educational needs of the state, OSSHE must be aware of unmet needs and be prepared to efficiently address new needs by creating programs, sharing programs, or importing programs from outside sources.

Implementation Notes:

2.1 OSSHE should develop guidelines for collection and facilitate sharing of needs assessments. Data should be generated to determine unmet degree program needs and curricular areas that are not degree programs.

2.2 OSSHE should assess the most efficient and effective method to address new needs through program creation, sharing resources, or importing programs from outside sources.

2.3 OSSHE should participate in national planning efforts to identify programs that are unavailable in Oregon that may be used to meet future needs (e.g., library sciences).

2.4

3. **Program Priority**

OSSHE should establish program priority criteria that guide the scheduling of programs/courses to be delivered to distance learning students.

Rationale/Background: Current technologies do not permit OSSHE institutions to deliver all programs/courses that are needed, creating a competitive environment for the scheduling of academic programs. The potential recurring problem of limited transmission resources demands a more sophisticated approach to scheduling of telecommunications time slots. Programs with limited enrollments for statewide distribution may be blocking more promising programs. The problem requires an ongoing evaluation of the instructional programs for both their instructional value and their ability to enroll students. OSSHE

should collect and maintain data on enrollments, costs, and student success. Guidelines will then be needed to facilitate the selection of programs/course schedules when conflicts arise. The current program priority policy favors in the following order: (1) whole programs over isolated courses, (2) programs which support licensing or continuation of licensing over those which do not, (3) existing programs over new programs, and (4) classes scheduled to end prior to 7:00 or begin after 7:00 over those which do not. Additional program priority policies should be reviewed that take into consideration statewide and community needs, enrollments, and costs. Mechanisms need to be in place that allow new programs to be introduced during times of limited transmission capability.

Implementation Notes:

3.1 The Chancellor's Office with advice from the Academic Council should annually review the program priority criteria to be used in scheduling programs/courses and make revisions as necessary.

3.2 The Chancellor's Office should maintain data on scheduling difficulties and regularly report this information to the OSSHE Distance Learning Committee (renamed from the OSSHE ED-NET Committee).

3.3

4. **Lead Institutions**

The Chancellor's Office should provide opportunities for OSSHE campuses to assume lead institutional responsibilities for providing selected and/or proposed distance delivered-programs and services.

Rationale/Background: The "lead institution" concept provides an effective method for future distance learning program development. Strategically designating lead institutions is a method of reducing inefficiencies, duplication, and wasteful competition. Appropriately selected lead institutions will be able to leverage their strengths to the benefit of the State and the System. The selection of lead institutions should be conducted at the Chancellor's level. The Chancellor's Office of Academic Affairs should provide opportunities for OSSHE institutions to respond to program needs identified through statewide assessments. Lead institution designation should encourage development of cooperative programs by assigning responsibility for coordination and leadership. A lead institution might not necessarily create or originate the entire program, but might work with other assigned institutions collaboratively to create high quality, complete, and flexible programs.

Implementation Notes:

4.1 The Chancellor's Office should develop guidelines for designating "lead institution" responsibility to one or more OSSHE campuses.

4.2 Lead institution designations should be approved by the Board of Higher Education.

4.3

5. **OSSHE University Centers**

OSSHE should develop shared Centers for the delivery of distance learning programs and courses in areas of the state in which there is identified need for instructional programs delivered from multiple OSSHE institutions.

Rationale/Background: Strategically located centers for distance learning programs will provide an OSSHE presence in communities in which there are identified needs for a range of higher education programs. Centers available for the delivery of programs from multiple OSSHE institutions should create cost efficiencies and strengthen program offerings.

Implementation Notes:

5.1 Using the Central Oregon University Center and the CAPITAL Center as examples, OSSHE should seek other opportunities to establish higher education learning centers in communities in which facilities are needed. Key avenues for identification of sites should include needs assessments, and discussions with community colleges, and business/industry, etc.

5.2 OSSHE campuses could submit proposals regarding the establishment of a new Center when one or more campus is seeking approval to offer programs in an area, to the Chancellor's Office of Academic Affairs.

5.3

6. **Quality Criteria**

Distance learning programs should result in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree/certificate awarded. Programs should be coherent, comprehensive, and developed with appropriate discipline and pedagogical rationale. Each program should provide for significant interaction, whether real time or delayed interaction, between faculty and students and among students.

Rationale/Background: Distance learning programs/courses should meet comparable standards of educational quality as other OSSHE programs/courses in their rigor and breadth. Integrity of programs should be paramount for degree programs delivered at a distance so that students are not simply provided a menu of disparate courses that are not well connected thematically or in other ways developed with appropriate discipline and pedagogical rationale. Institutions will need to follow Accreditation Association and Board of Higher Education policies for the review and approval of programs to be offered at new locations. Institutions should offer programs via distance learning that are already offered on campus. Institutions must ensure that existing programs when exported to distant sites maintain coherence and integrity. Ensuring integrity includes determining the appropriateness of the technology used in delivering the course; attending to student services that are critical to maintaining the quality of programs and must be considered in the planning and delivery of all distance programs; and evaluating course learning outcomes, and student and faculty satisfaction.

Implementation Notes:

6.1 The responsibility of educational quality should remain with the faculty and academic units.

6.2 OSSHE should continue its current program review process which includes review of campus proposals to offer an existing program to a site not now served.

6.3 OSSHE should monitor policies of the Northwest Association of Colleges and Universities regarding the review of distance learning programs.

6.4

7. **Review Process**

The program approval review process should ensure the appropriateness of the delivery technology for meeting the objectives of the program.

Rationale/Background: Different technologies inherently bring advantages and disadvantages to the instructional process; some curricular content can be adapted more effectively to some technologies than to others. OSSHE has a current program review process that involves submitting programs (for which institutions already have received Board authorization) that are proposed to be offered at new off-campus sites to the Chancellor's Office for review by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and subsequently the Academic Council. The review requires ensuring the appropriateness of the technology being recommended for delivery of the program, as well as the adequacy of resources to provide the program.

Implementation Notes:

7.1 Accreditation requirements cover appropriateness of technology for programs delivered through new modes.

7.2 OSSHE should continue its current program review process which includes review of campus proposals to offer an existing program to a site not now served.

7.3

8. **Program/Course Support Services**

Institutions providing distance learning programs should have appropriate faculty and student support services for teaching and learning via electronic delivery.

Rationale/Background: The process of developing a distance learning course using technology requires special skills and knowledge and takes considerable time. The primary faculty role is to lead the development and provide the content expertise, but high-quality, technology-based instruction will require a team effort including academic support, instructional design, etc. Institutions should develop support services that will be needed for programs and courses.

Implementation Notes:

8.1 Faculty should have access to instructional development support including training for teaching over distance learning systems, instructional design, graphics preparation, video training support, multimedia construction support, etc. These might come from instructional design staff assigned to campus media centers.

8.2

8.3

9. **Shared Courses**

Institutions should establish policies that permit the use of "shared courses" with the goal of making a select number of complete programs more accessible for students, at the same time making participation in these programs/courses by students "seamless."

Rationale/Background: Technology increasingly blurs the lines between academic institutions and between administrative units within institutions. The task is to fulfill traditional academic responsibilities for oversight and accreditation at the same time we use to advantage the opportunities inherent in the technologies. Efficiencies can be realized by sharing courses that might otherwise be duplicated. If shared programs are to work successfully, OSSHE must appear to the provider as a single system. The same principles of collaboration and exchange within OSSHE must be encouraged between OSSHE and Oregon's community colleges since "Oregon public higher education will increasingly function as a partner with the community colleges ..." (Education Unbounded, p. 11). Shared courses may need to be renumbered or double numbered to be easily recognized by students and systems. A common course numbering system will expedite shared courses.

Implementation Notes:

9.1 OSSHE should develop guidelines for shared programs and courses including residency policies and financial responsibility of the sending and receiving institutions.

9.2 The Joint Articulation Commission should work toward a common course numbering system, or renumbered or double numbered courses for distance-delivered courses that can be easily recognized by students and systems.

9.3

10. **Residency Requirements**

Institutions should adopt flexible residency requirements that permit the sharing of programs and courses among OSSHE institutions (and other distance delivery providers) at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Rationale/Background: To make best use of available resources, institutions will need to share programs and courses using the new technologies. This will include sharing programs and courses among OSSHE institutions as well as other accredited providers

of distance-delivered programs/courses. Residency policies may need to be revised to accommodate the use of shared courses. Institutions should review residency requirements to assure that the original intent of those requirements appropriately recognizes expanding technological capabilities. Transfer policies should recognize academic work completed from all appropriate sources including community colleges and other accredited colleges/universities.

Implementation Notes:

10.1 Campus residency policies should be reviewed and, if needed, revised to accommodate distance-delivered courses/programs.

10.2

10.3

11. Institutional Evaluation

The institutions offering the program should evaluate the program's educational effectiveness including assessments of learning outcomes and student and faculty satisfaction.

Rationale/Background: Evaluation of program effectiveness must be a component of off-campus programs as it is for on-campus programs. Institutions should ensure that appropriate evaluation procedures are in place, that faculty include distance-learning students in regular course evaluations, and that data from evaluations are reviewed and used to make program improvements.

Implementation Notes:

11.1 Campuses should institute policies that require faculty to include distance learning students in regular course evaluations.

11.2 Uses of technology should be evaluated as a part of the evaluation process to provide continuous input about effectiveness so quality related to technology (technical evaluation) can be assessed and changes and improvements can be applied as needed.

11.3 Distance learning evaluation results should be compared with on-campus results to monitor program effectiveness and provide a means for program improvements.

11.4

12. System Evaluation

The Chancellor's Office should collect and maintain data on enrollments in distance learning programs, costs, and technical assessments in order to determine the needs for increased capacity and provide for systemwide accountability.

Rationale/Background: Data on enrollment, costs, and successful uses of different technologies will provide needed information for change and improvements. Trend data in the use of instructional technologies will be needed for systemwide accountability reporting to a variety of constituents.

Implementation Notes:

12.1 The OSSHE Distance Learning Committee (renamed OSSHE ED-NET Steering Committee) has been working on a technical evaluation form that can be used at all institutions. Institutions should identify a method for having faculty implement the technical evaluation when regular student evaluations occur. Technical evaluation forms should be sent on to the OSSHE Office of Distance Learning for aggregated processing.

12.2 Data should be reviewed on an annual basis and shared widely throughout the system to facilitate planning efforts.

12.3

13. Transfer With Other Institutions

OSSHE institutions should remove barriers to transfer between OSSHE institutions and Oregon community colleges and other accredited postsecondary distance education providers, to facilitate distance-delivered education.

Rationale/Background: Many OSSHE distance learning programs rely on completion of lower division courses at community colleges. Increasingly, students will have access to academic courses from a range of accredited providers, both within and outside Oregon utilizing a range of technologies. OSSHE institutions will need to acknowledge the growing marketplace of courseware and institute policies that facilitate accessible transfer for future OSSHE students.

Implementation Notes:

13.1 OSSHE institutions should work with Oregon's community colleges to insure requirements established by the institutions are articulated.

13.2 OSSHE's Distance Learning Committee (previously ED-NET Steering Committee) should monitor policies of the relevant accrediting associations that guide the approval of distance-delivered programs to inform campus policies on transfer.

13.3

14. Calendar

To facilitate shared programs/courses and better utilization of limited distance education transmission and receive site facilities, OSSHE institutions should work toward a common academic calendar of start and end dates, class start times, and holidays.

Rationale/Background: OSSHE institutions cannot expand interinstitutional sharing of programs/service via the new technologies without moving to even more consistent calendars and start times; the need to get the most efficient use from limited transport facilities and a limited number of send and receive sites makes it imperative to work toward a common academic calendar of terms, class times, and holidays.

Implementation Notes:

14.1 The Academic Council should develop common multi-year calendars.

14.2 OSSHE should initiate discussions with Oregon community colleges regarding common objectives to move to more consistent calendars, start times, etc.

14.3

15. Infrastructure Planning

OSSHE should conduct planning for and support the development and use of appropriate technologies, including ED-NET, as a part of higher education's distance learning plan and work toward successful integration of multiple technologies to provide an electronic infrastructure that meets the instructional requirements and reaches the citizens of Oregon throughout the state.

Rationale/Background: Rapid changes in technology and multiple instructional presentation needs makes it necessary to develop and use multiple technologies. With the rapid changes in hardware and telecommunication technologies, it will likely be impossible to commit to single technologies. OSSHE should use all available resources to understand and develop compatible systems to meet the needs of institutions to develop and deliver programs and to address the needs of citizens to receive education. Monitoring the use of existing capacity, identifying unmet demands for capacity, and identifying unmet program needs will enable the System to make appropriate judgements about when to invest in additional capacity.

Implementation Notes:

15.1 OSSHE should continue its acquisition of ITFS licenses throughout the state.

15.2 OSSHE should continue to participate in ED-NET development planning.

15.3 OSSHE should continue to explore new technologies that offer increased capacity, particularly those that promise to hold down costs.

15.4 The OSSHE Media Council should develop guidelines to assist in the review of technologies. Guidelines should consider the following principles: OSSHE should favor systems that employ open architecture over proprietary systems; it should favor systems that are interactive over systems that are not; it should favor technologies that expand existing capacity over systems which compete with existing capacity; it should favor multiple-use technologies over single use technologies.

15.5

B. STUDENT SERVICES

16. **Student Services**

Enrolled on- and off-campus students should have comparable access to the range of student services appropriate to support their learning.

Rationale/Background: On- and off-campus students should have comparable access to student services. Services should be supportive of the part-time distance learner. Students should be provided with clear, complete information about programs of study including curriculum, course and degree requirements, the nature of faculty and student interaction, assumptions about technical competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, availability of academic support services, financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies. Enrolled students should have adequate access to the range of services appropriate to support their learning including admission services; registration through telephone, e-mail or fax; transcripting; financial aid -- including access to Veteran's Assistance programs, scholarships, grants and loans; academic advising; library services; methods of adding or dropping course; bookstore services; and adequate communication about registration and admission requirements. Generally, the receive site institution should be responsible for the equipment, materials, or facilities necessary for the student to receive instruction. Some services such as specialized academic advising, may need to be provided by the sending institution. Institutions involved should develop agreements which ensure the availability of services. Provisions for students with disabilities need to be developed.

Implementation Notes:

16.1 Institutions will need to develop an appropriate array of student services for the distance learner and clear agreements about who provides what services to ensure their availability.

16.2

16.3

17. **Centers for Services**

Where OSSHE is working to develop an OSSHE University Center (e.g., Bend, Beaverton), with multiple institutions providing programs, effort should particularly be made to centralize services at the University Center for use by students participating in various programs.

Rationale/Background: Maximum efficiencies should be sought at a central site through developing shared services. Services could be contracted with a local provider, such as a community college, or institutions sharing a "common" staff to provide services at the University Center.

Implementation Notes:

17.1 The central site administration should work closely with the institutions providing courses to provide services that are needed.

17.2

17.3

18. **Admissions**

Information and advice about requirements for admission to an institution and admission to a specific program should be available to distance learning students.

Rationale/Background: Knowledge about the institution's requirements for admission is needed to avoid unnecessary problems and costs. Distance learning students need clear, complete information about the differences between admission to an institution, and admission to a specific program.

Implementation Notes:

18.1 A range of informational and advising processes will be needed to serve a diverse student body, both on- and off-campus (e.g., print, videotape, advisors, toll-free advising numbers, etc.).

18.2 More generic admission policies based upon the number of credit hours required to be taken as a part-time student before being admitted to OSSHE institutions need to be made systemwide.

18.3

19. **Financial Aid**

To the extent that federal and other financial aid policies can support the distance learner, institutions should work toward comparability of aid programs for both on- and off-campus students.

Rationale/Background: Financial aid should be equitably made available to the distance learner. Financial aid policy in the past has primarily served fulltime learners, providing less access for part-time students. Since most distance learning students attend part-time, and increasingly are expected to receive courses from among a number of providers, policies must be developed that permit distance learning students to access financial aid in this future context. Since financial aid policy is guided both by federal and state policies, OSSHE Financial Aid Officers will need to sort through the requirements of aid and assist institutions, as feasible, to develop accessible provisions for serving distance learning students.

Implementation Notes:

19.1 Financial Aid Officers should be asked to advise the system as to how far we can go in meeting the needs of distance learning students, and accommodating "blended" programs (where students take courses from a variety of sending institutions).

19.2 Campuses should work toward consortial financial aid agreements among OSSHE institutions and between OSSHE institutions and community colleges.

19.3

20. Advising

Comparable advising services should be made available to both on- and off-campus students.

Rationale/Background: Advice about academic programs is critical to the success and productivity of the student. Distance learning students will need to receive services in a range of modes, using the new technologies.

Implementation Notes:

20.1 A range of advising processes will be needed to serve a diverse student group, both on- and off-campus (e.g., e-mail, telephone advising, information on GOPHERS, toll-free numbers).

20.2 It will be important that institutions determine who is responsible for advising and that information is readily available to the distance learning student.

20.3

21. Library

Appropriate library services must be made available to distance learning students.

Rationale/Background: Quality programs demand adequate library services for all students. Library staffs of both send and receive institutions must be prepared to support interlibrary loan, courier service, on-line access to catalogs and materials, and a growing array of facsimile tools.

Implementation Notes:

21.1 Specific library/staff resources need to be designated at campus libraries to adequately serve distance learning students as well as support interlibrary loan policies, courier services, and on-line access to catalogs and materials.

21.2 The Interinstitutional Library Council has developed Guidelines for Library Support for Distance Education Programs on OSSHE Libraries (March 10, 1995). This document will serve as a guide for distance learning library services in the future.

21.3

22. Computer Literacy Prerequisites

OSSHE should develop computer literacy programs for distance learning students, or guide students to available computer literacy programs, that provide the prerequisites students need to access distance learning programs/courses.

Rationale/Background: With the growth of multimedia instruction and networked technology, distance education will increasingly use computers and computer networks to provide parts or all of the instruction of a course or instructional module. It will be necessary that students come to the course with the requisite knowledge enabling them to use the technology. Because access to computers in homes and schools is not uniform, students arrive in distance classrooms in all states of readiness. OSSHE could address this problem by providing access to computer training; establishing computer literacy standards for enrollment; and clearly articulating computer prerequisites for courses. Distance education faculty should not be expected to bear responsibility for remediation in an area which may be entirely outside their expertise. OSSHE should actively encourage student access to networked computers and expect basic computer literacy for all students, regardless of where they are located. At issue will be to what extent this should be an admission expectation of students or whether OSSHE institutions should provide basic computer training for students, both on- and off-campus. There is an advantage to OSSHE to make networked computers readily available to students at study centers. As OSSHE seeks to serve more students through telecommunications instead of adding more bricks and mortar, it becomes imperative to invest in the tools that are required by students to access the new course delivery systems.

Implementation Notes:

22.1 Distance learning programs/courses should identify computer literacy prerequisites needed for students to participate successfully, so students may be properly advised about skill level that is required.

22.2 Technology literacy instruction should be developed by OSSHE institutions, in collaboration with community colleges, to provide distance learners with the knowledge necessary to successfully participate in distance learning courses. This instruction should be available in a live and independent study mode (e.g., workbooks, videotapes, audiotapes, self-paced computer materials, special short-courses).

22.3

C. FACULTY ISSUES

23. Compensation and Recognition

Good teaching should be rewarded for both on- and off-campus instruction, increased loads resulting from the use of distance learning technologies, and for pioneering or significant efforts in the application of technology.

Rationale/Background: As instruction for on- and off-campus becomes increasingly blurred, common methodologies will be used in both settings. It will be important to recognize and reward additional effort needed to develop mediated instruction and higher student enrollments potentially created using technology systems through appropriate compensation, help, or relief from other duties. Institutions should recognize excellence

in distance learning teaching equally with excellence in teaching on-campus; it should be a factor considered for salary merit, promotion, and tenure.

Implementation Notes:

23.1 The time and effort required to develop and deliver distance education courses should be recognized, and support should be provided, to help professors develop and deliver distance courses and other technology delivered instruction.

23.2 Institutions should revise compensation/recognition processes to ensure that excellence in distance learning teaching is appropriately rewarded.

23.3

24. **Responsibility**

Increasingly, faculty will be expected to have the ability to develop and deliver courses using technology and distance learning systems and methods.

Rationale/Background: Initially, some faculty will have more responsibility in the development and teaching of distance education courses than others because of their academic specialty, instructional abilities, and their institutional responsibilities for distance learning delivery. As we move closer to realizing the vision established in "Education Unbounded," more instructors will use distance learning technologies and systems.

Implementation Notes:

24.1 Since there is a movement to minimize the distinctions between off-campus and on-campus instruction, more faculty will be hired with the expectation that they will be involved in the process of developing and delivering technology-based distance education.

24.2

24.3

25. **Training**

Faculty new to distance education should attend training sessions or demonstrate competency to effectively teach over distance learning systems.

Rationale/Background: There are different skill sets needed to teach using technologies to students who are geographically separated from the site of instructional delivery, and faculty should be trained in how to use the new technologies to effectively teach off-site students. There should be training available for all faculty and a requirement to attend training or demonstrate their competencies before they begin teaching over distance learning systems. Research and information about distance education should be made readily available to faculty who wish to find out more about what colleagues are doing. Newsletters, informal discussion sessions, and so forth should be encouraged in addition to formal, faculty development programs.

Implementation Notes:

25.1 OSSHE campuses should provide training to faculty in the use of instructional technologies to effectively teach distance learning students. Local training has the advantage of providing familiarity with on-campus equipment and facilities.

25.2 As appropriate, centralized training workshops and training materials should be made available throughout the System.

25.3 Professional staff (e.g., instructional designer) should be available to give support to faculty preparing to teach over distance education systems.

25.4

26. **Intellectual Property Rights, Copyright**

An OSSHE committee should be established to draft guidelines for OSSHE policy on intellectual property rights and copyright in the instructional technology context.

Rationale/Background: As the use of technology in instruction becomes more prominent in higher education, the issues surrounding "who owns what" must be answered so fairness to the faculty and to the institutions can be maintained. OSSHE's policy on intellectual property rights and copyright needs to be reexamined (the current policy determines that academic course materials are owned by the institution and not the faculty except in specific instances where materials have a commercial value and ownership rights are specially contracted between the institution and faculty on a case-by-case basis). As a corollary to determining ownership, the OSSHE system will benefit from assisting faculty in refinement, commercialization, publishing, marketing, or selling works to third party distributors.

Implementation Notes:

26.1 The OSSHE Educational Technology Council should be given the responsibility to oversee development of a draft on intellectual property rights for review by the Academic Council and adoption by the State Board.

26.2 OSSHE should collect other System policies on intellectual property rights and copyright for use in OSSHE's review.

26.3

27. **Copyright Clearinghouse Function**

A strategy is needed for obtaining duplicated copyrighted materials to serve distance learning students and teaching faculty.

Rationale/Background: All campuses participating in sending courses electronically will be required to obtain permission for the use of copyrighted material. Rather than have each campus handle this at the faculty level, or even campus-wide, serious consideration of a centralized clearinghouse as is being done in some other states is warranted.

Implementation Notes:

27.1 Technical and legal advice on the changing situation of copyrighted materials relative to telecommunicated instruction and distance learning students should be sought.

27.2 There should be a study of existing clearinghouses strategies, or centrally purchased services to advise the OSSHE review process.

27.3

D. TUITION/FEES AND STUDENT ENROLLMENTS

28. Tuition

Distance education students should generally be expected to pay the same tuition as regular on-campus students.

Rationale/Background: Educational programs (content) are expected to cost the same for students but delivery costs will vary depending on the support and access costs. An important principle in developing expanded distance learning programs is equity of access to on-campus and off-campus learners. Financial equity and the likelihood that some distance education students will be economically disadvantaged suggest that students at a distance should not be asked to pay a higher tuition than on-campus students. This is consistent with developing tuition policies in many other states.

Implementation Notes:

28.1 The Board should state this expectation in its fee policies beginning with the academic year 1995.

28.2

28.3

29. Business/Industry Programs

Special programs developed by OSSHE institutions for business/industry can be marketed at a rate consistent with industry standards.

Rationale/Background: While retaining the principle of equity of cost for most of OSSHE's distance education programs and courses, institutions might choose to offer selected professional programs at higher tuition rates pegged to the market. This concept recognizes that specialty programs developed for business and industry make extra demand on faculty and resources which must be recovered.

Implementation Notes:

29.1

29.2

29.3

30. **Delivery Cost Fees**

Delivery cost fees for distance education students could be assessed where campuses identify costs associated with distance learning courses and services; fees for on-campus activities that distance education students would not be expected to use should be waived.

Rationale/Background: Educational programs (content) are expected to cost the same for students whether on- or off-campus, but delivery costs will vary depending on the support and access costs. While tuition itself should not be higher, delivery cost fees for distance learning could offset some of the cost of making education more convenient to learners. These might replace the building, incidental, and health fees charged to on-campus students.

Implementation Notes:

30.1 A determination should be made by the Chancellor's Office as to whether delivery fees should be approved by the Board (the Board must set all fees for enrollment, however the Board can delegate optional fees, or fees for services, to the campuses).

30.2

30.3

31. **Use of General Fund Monies**

General fund monies can be used by institutions, in line with campus missions, to deliver instruction by technology to both on- and off-campus students.

Rationale/Background: In order to realize the vision set forth in *Education Unbounded* for the year 2010, higher education must begin to make technology use a fundamental part of the teaching/learning process. OSSHE's policy in the recent past has been to restrict general fund monies to regular on-campus programs, requiring that continuing education and off-campus programs be operated on a self-support basis. With student populations seeking increased access to credit programs and courses throughout the state, there is growing pressure to deliver needed instruction to both on- and off-campus students. Institutions will need more flexibility in developing budgets to provide such programs, utilizing general fund monies in line with campus missions, to serve more students. Leveraging general fund monies will be a necessary method for serving more Oregonians as the demand for higher education services increases in the next decade.

Implementation Notes:

31.1

31.2

31.3

32. **Infrastructure Support**

Centralized support should be used to help build the distance education infrastructure and ongoing infrastructure expenses.

Rationale/Background: Major investments (e.g., bandwidth, centers, classrooms) will be needed at all campuses to permit significant expansion in the uses of technology for instruction, particularly to link OSSHE campuses and off-campus centers, and homes. Centralized support and coordination will enable efficient expansion of technology for multiple sector and multiple institution use. Centralized support will be needed to facilitate this expansion throughout the System.

Implementation Notes:

32.1 Support is presently being provided to the University Center in Bend, the CAPITAL Center and the ITFS system.

32.2 This type support should be expanded to other locations as feasible.

32.3

33. **Student Enrollments**

All OSSHE students should be counted for credit enrollment purposes regardless of the location or time of course enrollment, or the unit providing the course (continuing education or regular college units).

Rationale/Background: There will be increasing blurring of the lines between continuing education and regular college courses as technology uses expand. Accurate data counting methods need to be instituted at OSSHE institutions that account for all students, regardless of the method of delivery of programs and services. These data will need to be aggregated for accurate System reporting of students who are participating in credit programs, whether they are on- or off-campus students.

Implementation Notes:

33.1 Procedures are being implemented for this change.

33.2 Improvements in data systems should be ongoing.

33.3

34. **Identification in Databases**

For the foreseeable future, distance learning "credit" students should be identifiable in institution and System level databases, to facilitate planning, research, and evaluation of access to distance learning students.

Rationale/Background: In order to move toward the vision established in the Board's document, *Education Unbounded*, OSSHE needs to assure the quality of all courses and value them equally regardless of whether they are taught on- or off-campus. Use of technology will increasingly blur the lines between continuing education and regular

college courses. Accurate data counting methods need to be instituted to account for all students regardless of the location or time of the course enrollment, or the unit administering the course.

Implementation Notes:

34.1 OSSHE Institutional Research Services should work with campuses to define common data elements for distance learning students. At a minimum, students should be identifiable by the following technology-delivery mechanisms: interactive television, computer networks, (Internet, Oregon COMPASS, etc.). The use of the Banner System for this purpose has to be examined. Further discussion of noncredit students in the database will be needed. Though OSSHE needs to be able to identify mode of delivery for courses, this level of detail should disappear at the level of the transcript.

34.2

34.3

35. **Co-mingling of Courses**

Institutions should develop procedures that permit the commingling of students in credit courses/programs from on- and off-campus units, regardless of the source of registration.

Rationale/Background: Students should be able to participate in campus offerings, regardless of unit of origination, in a "seamless" registration. This will expand student access to courses, to include day, evening, weekend, self-paced, and eventually "shared" courses (with other institution) modes.

Implementation Notes:

35.1 Institutions should develop registration procedures which are blind to artificial barriers between types of courses ("regular on-campus," "continuing education," etc.) so that students may take advantage of all offerings.

35.2 This could include the removal of the tuition plateau at campuses where there are barriers to the co-mingling of students in classes from on-campus and self-support units by virtue of the sponsoring financial unit(s).

35.3

E. TECHNICAL STANDARDS

36. **Technical Production Guidelines for Courses**

Campus representatives should establish quality guidelines for technical production and course instructional strategy methods, including a plan for sharing evaluation findings from multiple users -- students, faculty, technical support staff -- with institutions and OSSHE.

Rationale/Background: Technical and production standards are important for establishing and maintaining consistent quality throughout OSSHE. Adherence to production standards will provide a baseline for quality and appearance that will help facilitate students learning. Also, in distance education, technology and production are added to the traditional list of variables used to evaluate instructional performance. Production guidelines for video and mixed technology instruction should be developed to establish standards for quality. Because faculty are not typically trained in production and presentation technologies and because technology is rapidly changing, it is important for institutions to provide support for developing the presentation. Evaluation of production and course methods should be made on a regular basis. Deans, department heads, peers, students, and media staff should be involved in the process. The evaluation should include faculty, media staff, production support, the technology used, the receive sites, and the instructional methodology and content. Outcomes based upon this research should be made available throughout OSSHE and changes made based upon the findings.

Implementation Notes:

36.1 Guidelines should be published throughout OSSHE with the OSSHE Media Council providing leadership to develop consistent production and technical standards among OSSHE campuses.

36.2 Issues of faculty participation, incentives, and rewards need to be addressed by the academic deans and faculty senates.

36.3

37. **OSSHE Media Council Role in Setting Standards**

The OSSHE Media Council should review and make recommendations on hardware, telecommunications standards and production standards. Send and receive site standards should be developed.

Rationale/Background: Compatible technologies are necessary if campuses are to share courses and for efficiencies so that multiple programs can share equipment and facilities at learning center sites around the state.

Implementation Notes:

37.1 The OSSHE Media Council will seek input from others in the OSSHE community and the WICHE region (e.g., library, computers and telecommunications councils) and make recommendations about technology, receive site development, and production standards.

37.2 Joint purchases of equipment are to be encouraged.

37.3

38. **Send and Receive Site Standards**

OSSHE should develop compatible and comparable resources, services, and procedures across send and receive sites.

Rationale/Background: Having receive sites that are dissimilar in the types of technology available, resources, and services will disadvantage some sites and the students who receive their instruction at those sites. OSSHE needs to have consistency in facility design and engineering, production directing, and faculty support. Present and future program quality and access hinge, in part, on availability, facilitation, and quality of receive sites, and whether the site is at community centers or within individuals' homes. There is a need to avoid "technology creep" while simultaneously encouraging experimentation and development of independent technology. There should be continued development of shared OSSHE Centers in key population areas throughout the state. Further, OSSHE should maintain a program of assessment and evaluation of the uses of technology. The OSSHE Media Council should review and make recommendations on hardware, telecommunication systems, and equipment standards. The group should make recommendations and seek compatibility and standards for OSSHE distance learning receive sites while encouraging experimentation with advanced communication systems.

Whereas compatibility of receive sites will assure the best distribution of programs, financing of receive sites is a different matter. Receive-site financing should be pursued through shared OSSHE investment, partnerships with businesses, direct state support, community development, private investment, and grants. This will encourage continuing infrastructure development of receive sites in many different locations and businesses across the state.

Knowledgeable professionals should be involved in the design of the receive site classrooms. The sites may be different depending upon the program(s) that will be received. To the extent possible, OSSHE should have input into the development of all receive sites where OSSHE institutions are involved. Coordination and standardization of receive sites makes it possible for OSSHE to deliver of shared programs to multiple sites. We should work toward OSSHE-administered distance learning sites in order to increase efficiencies for all participating institutions. Receive sites must be adequately developed to include quality audio systems, user-friendly monitors, fax machines, networked computers, and access to the OSSHE libraries' on-line catalogs. Receive sites must be adequately staffed to support both instruction and technology. Staff have responsibility for setting up and operating the distance learning classrooms at each site. Staff must assist the distance learning student, be able to work with a number of faculty from different disciplines and institutions, and be knowledgeable about all receive-site equipment.

Implementation Notes:

38.1 Guidelines for the infrastructure development of the receive sites should be developed by knowledgeable professionals within OSSHE. While the sites may differ depending upon the program(s) being delivered, there should be a basic set of equipment, and resources available.

38.2 Site facilitators are essential for most sites that serve a community of students and multiple programs.

38.3

SUMMARY OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Statewide Plan**
   OSSHE in concert with other partners should develop a statewide plan for the delivery of needed college-level distance learning programs and services.

2. **Needs Assessment**
   Working with the campuses, OSSHE should collect local and regional needs assessments from multiple sources in order to coordinate statewide needs assessments to be used in planning for distance learning programs and services.

3. **Program Priority**
   OSSHE should establish program priority criteria that guide the scheduling of programs/courses to be delivered to distance learning students.

4. **Lead Institution**
   The Chancellor's Office should provide opportunities for OSSHE campuses to assume lead institutional responsibilities for providing selected and/or proposed distance delivered-programs and services.

5. **OSSHE University Centers**
   OSSHE should develop shared Centers for the delivery of distance learning programs and courses in areas of the state in which there is identified need for instructional programs delivered from multiple OSSHE institutions.

6. **Quality Criteria**
   Distance learning programs should result in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree/certificate awarded. Programs should be coherent, comprehensive, and developed with appropriate discipline and pedagogical rationale. Each program should provide for significant interaction, whether real time or delayed interaction, between faculty and students and among students.

7. **Review Process**
   The program approval review process should ensure the appropriateness of the delivery technology for meeting the objectives of the program.

8. **Program/Course Support Services**
   Institutions providing distance learning programs should have appropriate faculty and student support services for teaching and learning via electronic delivery.

9. **Shared Courses**
   Institutions should establish policies that permit the use of "shared courses" with the goal of making a select number of complete programs more accessible for students, at the same time making participation in these programs/courses by students "seamless."

10. **Residency Requirements**
Institutions should adopt flexible residency requirements that permit the sharing of programs and courses among OSSHE institutions (and other distance delivery providers) at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

11. **Institutional Evaluation**
The institutions offering the program should evaluate the program's educational effectiveness including assessments of learning outcomes and student and faculty satisfaction.

12. **System Evaluation**
The Chancellor's Office should collect and maintain data on enrollments in distance learning programs, costs, and technical assessments in order to determine the needs for increased capacity and provide for systemwide accountability.

13. **Transfer With Other Institutions**
OSSHE institutions should remove barriers to transfer between OSSHE institutions and Oregon community colleges and other accredited post-secondary distance education providers,to facilitate distance-delivered education.

14. **Calendar**
To facilitate shared programs/courses and better utilization of limited distance education transmission and receive site facilities, OSSHE institutions should work toward a common academic calendar of start and end dates, class start times, and holidays.

15. **Infrastructure Planning**
OSSHE should conduct planning for and support the development and use of appropriate technologies, including ED-NET, as a part of higher education's distance learning plan and work toward successful integration of multiple technologies to provide an electronic infrastructure that meets the instructional requirements and reaches the citizens of Oregon throughout the state.

16. **Student Services**
Enrolled on- and off-campus students should have comparable access to the range of student services appropriate to support their learning.

17. **Centers for Services**
Where OSSHE is working to develop an OSSHE University Center (e.g., Bend, Beaverton), with multiple institutions providing programs, effort should particularly be made to centralize services at the University Center for use by students participating in various programs.

18. **Admissions**
Information and advice about requirements for admission to an institution and admission to a specific program should be available to distance learning students.

19. **Financial Aid**
To the extent that federal and other financial aid policies can support the distance learner, institutions should work toward comparability of aid for both on- and off-campus students.

20. **Advising**
Comparable advising services should be made available to both on- and off-campus students.

21. **Library**
Appropriate library services must be made available to distance learning students.

22. **Computer Literacy Prerequisites**
OSSHE should develop computer literacy programs for distance learning students, or guide students to available computer literacy programs, that provide the prerequisites students need to access distance learning programs/courses.

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Appendix

CONTRIBUTORS

The individuals listed below representing the OSSHE ED-NET Steering Committee, the Council of Continuing Higher Education Deans/Directors, the OSSHE Media Council, and the OSSHE Interinstitutional Library Council, contributed to drafts of this document. OSSHE Chancellor's Office Academic Affairs staff and OSSHE Academic Council synthesized input in order to eliminate redundant information among various sections.

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